



Elder Financial Abuse

Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

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Auto Repair Fraud

How can I tell if an auto repair shop is trying to bilk me?

Unscrupulous mechanics may falsely claim that your vehicle needs expensive repairs. Often mechanics scare seniors into believing their vehicle is unsafe and needs immediate repair. For example, what was supposed to be a simple oil change suddenly becomes a major tuneup or costly brake job.

Warning Signs

- The repair shop refuses to provide a written estimate for the cost of repairs.
- An auto mechanic tries to pressure you into repairs by saying that your car is unsafe to drive.

Prevention

- Ask family, friends and coworkers which repair shops they like and why.
- Try out a repair shop with a minor maintenance job, such as an oil change. If you are happy with the service, the repair shop may be right for you.
- Always get a second opinion on a vehicle's repairs. Don't be intimidated into making an overpriced or unnecessary repair.
- Do not be pressured into costly repairs. Aside from an overheated engine, a flat tire or very bad brakes, you can probably drive the vehicle to another local mechanic to get a second opinion. If you believe the car is unsafe, have it towed to the mechanic of your choice.

If you suspect fraud and would like to file a complaint, call the state Bureau of Automotive Repair at (800) 952-5210. You may also check to see if a repair shop is registered with the state at www.autorepair.ca.gov.